

COMMITTEE FOR LINGUISTICS IN EDUCATION
MINUTES OF MEETING 72

Wednesday 6th November 2002
2.00-5.00 p.m.

at The Institute of Education, University of London

1. Welcomes, introductions and apologies for absence (RI)

PRESENT: Richard Aplin (ALA), Mary Auckland (RCSLT), Sue Barry (LAGB, secretary), Keith Brown (LAGB), Billy Clark (LAGB), Keith Davidson (NATE), Ros Fisher (UKRA), BSA Charlotte Franson (NALDIC), Dick Hudson (LAGB), Roz Ivanič (BAAL, Chair), Terry Lamb (ALL), Constant Leung (BAAL), Janet Maybin (BAAL), Marina Spiegel (NATECLA)

APOLOGIES: Mike Baynham (BAAL), April McMahon (LAGB), Sharon Curry (ALL), Teresa O'Brien (BAAL), Celine Castelino (BSA)

The committee welcomed Billy Clark (Middlesex University), who joins as a representative of the LAGB (to replace Anthea Fraser Gupta).

2. Amendments to Minutes of Meeting 71 (RI)

Item 3:6 (CF):

§3 should read: "Val McGregor (NLS) is working with EMAG teachers to develop training materials"

Item 10 (CF):

The following paragraph should be added after §1 ("..Reception and Year 1 pupils"):
"The QCA has introduced a profile for the Foundation Stage (pre existing Key Stage 1 to the end of Reception Year - age 5) so that teachers and others working with this age group will be able to record and monitor developments in several areas, including 'communication, language and literacy'."

3. Matters arising:

Item 5 (RI):

RI has endeavoured to set up a meeting with Laura Huxford but so far without success. It was agreed that RI should write to Laura Huxford expressing regret that a meeting has not been possible, and to offer input from CLIE on the forthcoming Review of the NLS framework.

ACTION RI

RF noted that the Speaking and Listening strand would be included in the Review.

Item 5 (CF):

CF reported on the discussions between NALDIC and NS KS3. A pilot EAL strategy within KS3 is about to appear; and an EAL coordinator has been seconded to the DFES.

TL noted that the new ITT standards make specific reference to EAL (information on the ALL website (<http://www.all-languages.org.uk>))

Item 6 (DH):

It had been agreed that all organisations whose responses to the 14-19 Green Paper are on the web should send the url to DH for inclusion as a link on CLIE's website. DH has so far received information from NATE and ALL.

4. CLIE membership (RI & SB)

4.1 Change of officers

It was agreed that DH would be the new Chair of CLIE, and will shadow the current chair at the June 2003 meeting.

The new Secretary will be a BAAL representative.

ACTION: BAAL representatives

The change of officers will take effect next academic year (November 2003)

4.2 Contact details

Current contact details are to be circulated with these minutes.

ACTION: SB

Representatives for NAAE (National Association for Advisors of English) and the British Dyslexia Association are currently being sought.

4.3 Co-opted members

There are currently two coopted members on the committee (Brian Street and Deborah Cameron): according to the CLIE constitution there are two additional coopted places. It was agreed to ask Gunter Kress and Tim Shortis to be coopted.

or from Carter or Mahendra Verma or Any other re assessment

ACTION: RI

5. Dates and topics for future meetings (RI)

a. February 2003: Education for the Deaf

b. The Teaching of Grammar was suggested as a topic for a future session (RF)

6. Research on Grammar for Writing

The article "Grammar for Writing?: A Critical Review of Empirical Evidence," Dominic Wyse (*The British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol 49/4, December 2001) (with agenda papers) was discussed.

This paper questions the assumption (according to Wyse made in *Grammar for Writing*) that syntactic complexity is a reliable sign of good writing. DH noted that complex sentences (in the technical term, not necessarily 'syntactic complexity' in its wider sense) are a measure of development, and are found more frequently at KS3 than earlier years. whether children should be encouraged to use these structures is a different question, however (RF), and children's writing does not follow a set formula.

There was general agreement that teachers are lacking in confidence as they feel they lack some of the relevant knowledge and yet are under pressure from target-setting and inspection. Teachers are deliverers of a system they may not fully understand themselves (TS).

There is an acceptance within, for example, EAL teaching, of the need to teach how language works but this is not always accepted in the teaching of native speakers (KB), although CL noted younger PGCE trainees were happier with linguistic technicalities. Some other European countries (Portugal, Denmark) are in a position similar to that of the UK in the 1980's, with little general acceptance of the need for a linguistic framework, and there is much interest in the NLS (DH).

The research cited by Wyse in his criticisms of the teaching of grammar is not based on current practice in the classroom. It was agreed that there is a need for up-to-date research on whether and how the teaching of language structure helps in the development of writing. This research should be available as initiatives are developed: we need to address the question of how to make research heard by policy-makers (TL).

7. Meeting with QCA, Nov 5th 2002 (RI and DH)

Please see attachment 1.

8. Reports from representatives of organisations (ALL)

It was agreed that at future meetings reports from organisations would be forwarded in advance to the secretary for inclusion in the agenda papers. This would ensure that details, in particular of forthcoming events, are communicated accurately and at the relevant time.

a. UKRA (United Kingdom Reading Association):

(i) Forthcoming international conference:

Children and their Texts Homerton College, University of Cambridge, 11th-13th July 2003

(ii) National conference on *Spoken English* Croydon, 28th Feb 2003

b. ALL (National Association of Teachers of English):

The National Languages Strategy Steering Group met in September; the White Paper is expected in January.

c. BAAL (British Association of Applied Linguists):

i) Mike Baynham (Chair, BAAL) has written (on 1/10/02) to the Home Secretary, David Blunkett M.P., in response to his remarks on speaking English in the home, and inviting him to engage in a debate on the issues.

ii) B.A.A.L. /CUP Seminar Programme 2003: Call for Proposals (3 seminars)

iii) The 2002 BAAL Book Prize was awarded to: Manfred Görlach, *A Dictionary of European Anglicisms*, OUP

d. LAGB (Linguistics Association of Great Britain):

Why Education Needs Linguistics (LAGB Autumn Meeting, UMIST, September 2002). Dick Hudson led a discussion on the various ways in which linguistics can contribute to (primary & secondary level) education, and also on the ways linguistics can benefit from this.

e. BSA (Basic Skills Agency):

Please see Attachment 2.

9. A.O.B.

(DH) Minutes of previous CLIE meetings are now available on the CLIE website:

<http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/dick/ec/clietop.htm>

10. The New AS / A Level English Language: What are First Year Students Bringing with Them?

Tim Shortis, Research Fellow, Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol and Chief Examiner for AQA A Level English Language, Specification B

CLIE Meeting No. 72: November 6th 2002 Attachment 1

Agenda item 7: (RI & DH)

RI (for CLIE) and DH (for LAGB) both attended the QCA English team's "Information Exchange meeting" on 5 November 2002. The team arranges such meetings twice a year for professional organisations that have an interest in the English curriculum, ranging from the British Library to The Poetry Book Society. The English team reported the findings of their regular survey of schools, and some new initiatives.

Here are some items that we found interesting:

- a. The English team has expanded by three members, all of whom were at this meeting: Elizabeth Taylor, Paul Wright and Ros Hicks; Janet White was the only member of the original team there.
- b. Primary teachers are generally more confident than last year in English, but still not confident about Speaking and Listening; primary schools are tending to apply the Literacy Strategy more flexibly than before.
- c. At secondary level, the National Strategy (for KS3) has had a strong impact on Year 7 (but less so on Years 8 and 9), and most schools have had in-service training for literacy across the curriculum (an important part of the Strategy). But again Speaking and Listening is still the poor relation compared with reading and even more so compared with writing.
- d. Many primary teachers have learned a lot of grammar from "Grammar for Writing" and feel more confident in using it in their teaching, but they tend to want more information about grammatical features specific to particular genres such as narrative writing or various non-fiction text-types.
- e. Secondary teachers have found that grammatical analysis is particularly popular with boys.
- f. Secondary teachers are finding that children coming up from primary schools already know key grammatical terminology which they can build on for explicit teaching about writing.
- g. Most secondary teachers felt that standards of writing were rising.
- h. As in primary schools, secondary teachers want more training in sentence-level grammar, and more information about grammatical features of particular text-types.
- i. The QCA team is planning a research project next year on the effects of grammar teaching on the quality of writing.
- j. They announced a very useful web page on which there are commented examples of pupils' work graded by level as well as by age:
<http://www.ncaction.org.uk/subjects/english/index.htm>
- k. The team are working on a rewrite of the 1998 booklet on teaching speaking and listening; they're still working with Ron Carter on the grammar of spoken English.
- l. QCA is very keen to develop Robin Alexander's ideas about the role of talk in learning, and the English team is making a major contribution. The idea is that UK children are behind children in other countries in the amount and kind of talk, and that talking is very important for learning.
- m. The English team has almost finished a project on how writing develops from Year 7 to Year 9.

Dick Hudson

Agenda item 8: (CC)

Report from BSA

Effective Practice in Writing at Key Stage 2

Graham Frater

This new report looks at good practice in developing writing at Key Stage 2 by studying schools where the gap between attainment in reading and attainment in writing is not as wide as it is in most schools.

The evidence was gathered from visits to a core of 17 primary schools, identified by their local authorities, that were highly successful in developing children's writing.

The report talks about management, the National Literacy Strategy, the promotion of reading, and positive practices in sustaining children's writing.

To order any of the resources listed below, you can either order online, or contact our distributors on 0870 600 2400 or email to basicskills@twoten.press.net.

Bridges for Literacy Welsh/English

Clear evidence has been seen of a dip in aspects of English in the early years of secondary school. As pupils transfer from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 there are initial understandable strains upon learning.

Although the survey was conducted in English schools, the findings are relevant to Wales and to the teaching of Welsh.

This report is the outcome of a survey undertaken in seven primary and seven secondary schools to look at bridging arrangements for literacy. All the survey schools were selected by their LEAs as being places where promising practices were emerging, or being consolidated. The report includes eight case studies, and the main findings and conclusions from the survey.

Available free of charge

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